SOME

Modeſt Reflections

UPON

Mr. *STEPHENS*'s late BOOK,

ENTITULED,

A Plain Relation of the late Action at SEA, between the Engliſh, Dutch, *and* French *FLEETS, from* June 22. *to* July 5. *laſt. With Reflections thereupon, and upon the Preſent State of the NATION*, &c.

WITH A

VINDICATION

OF THE

CHURCH of ENGLAND

FROM

What He has therein Advanc'd againſt Her.

By a Hearty Lover of King William *and Queen* Mary.

LONDON,

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To the Reader.

HAving accidentally some time since met with a Book, Entituled, A plain Relation of the late Action at Sea, *&c. I read it with some greediness, being tempted with a lawfull curiosity to satisfie my self in matter of Fact, relating to so great an Action. In the perusing of which Account, as I must acknowledge, I found satisfaction in some things; so others seem'd very disagreeable both to those Notions which I had entertain'd, and indeed to Experience and Common Reason, especially in what he writes relating to the Church of* England, *whereof he seems to imply he is, and I professe my self to be a Member. I acknowledge, as I proceeded, I cou'd hardly, without some Indignation, pass by many things which I there met with; and after I had gone through the same, have ever since, in vain, expected an Answer, especially to that part which contains, I hope, many groundless Reflections on the Establish'd Protestant Church of this Nation. On this, at last, I took Pen in hand, and bestow'd a few Hours in Examining and Con-*

futing such things as I thought deserv'd it; which having communicated to a Friend, at his desire I now publish; tho' upon the Character he gives me of the Author, and my Observations on his Writings, believing him to be really an honest Man, and one who means well to the Publick, and may, in some Instances, do it service, I have review'd what was written, and given several things a less severe turn than I at first intended: Which is all I have to let you know before you come to the Book.

Some

Some Modeſt

REFLECTIONS, &c.

THE Reaſon why this ſo much talk'd-of Book ought to be Anſwer'd, is palpable and obvious, becauſe 'tis full of Reflections on the preſent State of Affairs, or rather a kind of a Compendium of what is objected by miſtaken Friends or bitter Enemies. The reaſon why that Perſon, who has now undertaken to Anſwer it, thought not fit to do it before, was, that he expected ſome better Hands would attempt it, eſpecially when it contain'd Reflections ſharp enough on ſuch as were well able to hold the Cudgels againſt him that made 'em. But thoſe from whom it was expected neglecting to take him to task, leſt what he advances ſhould have deeper or larger Influence, becauſe unanſwer'd, ſhould be thought unanſwerable, theſe few Sheets are at laſt ſent abroad into the World on purpoſe to diſabuſe it, and place ſome things in a better Light, which he and others have render'd more dark and obſcure by pretending to explain 'em. Nor can I expect but to be rank'd by the Zealous Author, for this undertaking, among thoſe whom he ſtyles a Faction; perhaps too he'll ſay I'm of the Court-party, and conſequently that I am guided by Guilt or Intereſt in this attempt. But the beſt is one who ſhoots his Bolt ſo nim-

bly as he, is in no great probability of hitting what he aims at; and if he ſhould beſtow the Character of a Favourer of Debauchery upon me, as he's very liberal that way, I have yet the Comfort of very good Company, as he has order'd it, all the Biſhops in *England* being, if you'll believe him, in little better Circumſtances. This all that reade him or know him will grant. He tells the Reader he's a Hearty Friend to King *William* and Queen *Mary*; but after all, he is certainly Notion-ſtruck, and believes he has an extraordinary Call to the great Work of Reforming Kingdoms. A Privy-Counſellor at once to the Kings of Earth and Heaven, and knows as well why Providence did not give us leave to beat the *French*, as how to make King *William* the moſt Glorious Prince in Chriſtendom, if he would but follow his advice, that is, Gargil his Council, Fleets and Armies; turn out every Man that would Swear, Drink and Whore; Encounter the King of *France* with the remainder, and obtain a miraculous Victory by the virtue of *Venner's* promiſe, that One ſhould chaſe a Thouſand: And this indeed, if look'd into, is the ſumm, drift and upſhot of all his Writings. He concludes his Epiſtle with a Politick Complement to his Reader; a Cauſe placed there's *in terrorem* (I have ſeen ſomething like it hang up in a Corn-field) to ſcare any one from diſliking or anſwering him.

Know therefore alſo, ſays he (with a huge deal of Grandeur and Authority) *if thou canſt be offended with him who wiſhes ſo well to his Country, and no Ill to thy ſelf, thou canſt be no good Man.* Very well your Argument is.---*He that can be offended with any one who wiſhes well to their Country, and to thoſe who are offended, can be no good Man.* This is the ſenſe of this Complaint, or it has none at all: And if 'tis fair Arguing, you alſo ought to have a care how you are offended with your Anſwer; who, proteſt as deeply as you

you can, that *he wiſhes well to his Country, and no Ill to you.* Nay, as you do that, you may be better and wiſer, (a very Charitable wiſh,) for otherwiſe you have given away that Character you have ſo deſervedly prov'd of a *good Man*, according to your own Arguing.

To leave the Preface, and fall upon the Book it ſelf: In conſidering of which, we'd willingly obſerve ſome Method, though 'tis very difficult to keep any, in treating of what has none. However, the beſt way will be to throw the Contents thereof into theſe following different heaps, in one or other of which 'twill go hard but we ſhall meet with and clear all the ſeeming Arguments there laid together.

The unfortunate buſineſs of the Fleet; the general Miſmanagement of Affairs; the Debauchery of the Nation, and thoſe in publick Employments; the Behaviour of Church-men towards Diſſenters, and others; his own Bill at the end.

For the firſt of theſe: *The Affair of the Fleet.* Here the Author of the Reflections needed not to have hedged in his Bett ſo carefully, and to fright any one from Anſwering what he writes on that Head, [Enter his Proteſtation] (as he does *Page* 10.) "That it requires a Perſon of rare "Invention, of equal Impudence, and void of all Senſe "of Honour and Love to his Country to compoſe a Vindi- "cation of that Tranſaction---and People of no leſs ſtupi- "dity and eaſineſs to be impos'd upon by ſuch pretences--- "and lower---ſuch a Miſcarriage as none will offer to ex- "cuſe, who are not either Partners in the Crime, or no "good Friends to the Cauſe. I ſay he's ſafe enough in that Lock, and needed not have denounc'd ſo terribly againſt any one who ſhould endeavour to force him out on't. The matter of Fact, of the Baffle we received in the next Action, which, among many other ill Conſequences, did undoubtedly retard the Reduction of *Ireland*, is too notori-

ouſly and ſadly true, and can't but force the Indignation of any Engliſh-man who reflects upon't, and few or none who deſerve that Character but will, I'm pretty confident, agree with him in his Cenſure upon the ſame: That in point of Honour it ought to be enquired into ſtrictly to the bottom, and puniſhed ſeverely to the ſatisfaction of the World, and in point of Juſtice no leſs. But then had this Reflecter been either very Juſt, or very Honourable, would he not, before he had Try'd and Condemn'd thoſe perſons concern'd in this unhappy buſineſs, (or Printed Letters to purpoſe 'em for Execution?) Wou'd he not, at leaſt, have heard 'em ſpeak one word for themſelves before the fatal ſtroke? or is it ſo very fair to Hang 'em firſt, and Judge 'em afterwards? He cou'd not but know what they plead in their own defence; and the weaker 'tis, the eaſier anſwer'd. For their not Fighting ſooner, but turning againſt the Wind, is pleaded by their few Friends, what is as to the ſubſtance of it, in his own Printed Relations, *Pag.* 2*d* and 3*d*. In a Council of Flag-affairs 'twas agreed not to fight them. And when at laſt actually engag'd, he can't but have heard what has been farther ſaid by ſome who have born the largeſt, and I believe the juſteſt of Cenſure for that Action.-----That in the Engagement the Wind was beat down, as they phraſe it, and that 'twas therefore impoſſible for ſome of the Ships to come up and relieve, or joyn the other. The wants of the Fleet, the thinneſs of the Sea-men, the diſproportion in Numbers, the hazards of a cloſe Engagement, and danger of loſing all, which every one knows are urg'd by thoſe here concern'd, how weakly ſoever.

Theſe things, and what was before mentioned, deſerv'd ſome Conſideration, and a fair Anſwer from a perſon ſo impartial as the Reflecter wou'd be thought to be, and perhaps really is, though ſo very eager and zealous in the buſineſs

buſineſs he undertakes, that he had not time to conſider ſuch ſmall matters as theſe mention'd. But it ſeems one Neck is not ſufficient, a great many more muſt come in for Compliance both by Sea and Land. Thus he asks the Queſtion, *Page* 11. "Is't likely he would have behav'd "himſelf as he did, if he had not had ſome encourage- "ment at leaſt by a willing and early Compliance. There he has indeed put the matter beyond Controverſie. He proves all thoſe were guilty who comply'd with thoſe Councils which had ſuch unhappy effects; and thus fairly brings in the Fleet with others, both *Dutch* and *Engliſh*; for as he himſelf in his Relation, 'twas agreed upon in a General Council of the Flag-Officers not to fight, becauſe of the diſproportion of the Numbers. He next adds ſome *Obſervations*, whether his own or any others, 'tis not much material, complaining that the Fleet was full of *Torrington*'s Creatures; and had he no more to anſwer for but this, I can't think 'twould much affect him: For ſhall not an Admiral have power to advance or recommend ſuch as he thinks have ſerved the King faithfully? Or is not he, if honeſt, a proper Judge?

But that which ought to have been conſidered here, is the Behaviour of thoſe who indeed had been rais'd by him; and were there not of that Number, who ſignalized themſelves in the Action, as much as 'twas poſſible for Men to do, and have been ſince deſervedly preferr'd for the ſame to higher Stations, with the applauſe of all Parties, a convincing Argument againſt one of theſe miſtakes, if not both? Nor is another Complaint he and his Obſerver makes leſs remarkable, *Page* 14. That perſons are preferr'd according to the time they had ſerv'd in the Fleet; a wonderfull Accuſation, and truly weighty Reflections as on the Government! What gives Experience but Time; and what deſerves Preferment more than Experience?

perience? I confeſs I ſhould have thought the contrary practice would have deſerved Cenſure, but this rather Commendation. Here he enquires into the Effects of our Misfortune at Sea: He tells us very bad news, that we have promoted nothing all this while, nor are in any better Condition than we were in the Spring laſt was Twelvemonth. One would have thought the Reduction of *Ireland* had been a good employment for one Summer, and all the glorious Actions of His Majeſty's Court (which I will call ſo, tho' my Antagoniſt call me Flatterer for my pains) had deſerved ſome ſmall acknowledgment both to God and Man. But he has a pleaſant Anſwer for that in the following lines; We are but where we were, if *Ireland* ſhould be wholly reduced, becauſe it might have certainly been done at firſt with leſs difficulty than now the taking of *Limmerick*, *Tyrconnel* then only wanting ſome body to quit it to. For *Ireland's* not being reduced ſooner, how often has he been told of it? The then Prince brought with him only ſome Fourteen thouſand; thoſe who joyn'd him after his Landing, part for Fear, part for Intereſt, he could not depend upon; ſome who had joyn'd him with the firſt at his Landing, not having perhaps their Ambition and Avarice ſatisfied, were again his Enemies: All things were unſettled and in a hurry: There was great probability of accompliſhing all without Bloodſhed: And after all, conſidering the nature of the *Iriſh*, is not *a total new Conqueſt* better for *England* than ſuch terms as they'd have then ſtood upon, when their Eſtates and Numbers were unbroken?

He goes on, *Page* 16. and tells us, Beſides *Time*, we have loſt *Lives*; a very ſtrange thing in War, eſpecially in Sea-fights, where there are no Back-doors. And Trade too; as ſtrange as the other? But have the *Dutch* and

French

French as free a Trade as they us'd to have? or are the *English* only unfortunate? But worſe yet, we have loſt *Ships*, Effects and all to our *Enemies*----And wou'd it not have been ſtrange indeed if we had done it to our *Friends*? And all this with *Expence* too. Stranger ſtill! but here he has the good luck to be an ill gueſſer, when he prognoſticates the difficulty of getting More ſupplies. The *Parliament of England* act on more generous Principles; and ſo far was that, or any Conſideration of the like nature, from byaſſing that Auguſt Aſſembly, that a Summ proportionable to the occaſion was granted almoſt as ſoon as demanded. He complains the Confederacy is in danger of being broken----But all the World muſt grant, had they done as much on that ſide as the King on his, things had been in a far better poſture than now we find 'em.

His next Complaint is juſt as reaſonable as all that go before, of *Many unexpected accidents which May occur before next Summer.* This, I think, is a little too hard, that we Muſt anſwer what is *not* done, as well as what *is*; and Make an Apology for a thouſand ill things that never were nor will be.

He proceeds in the Miſmanagement of publick Affairs, to make a great, and perhaps a too juſt Complaint of the Sale of Offices; which though it might be ſo order'd as not to be any way prejudicial to the publick, as at preſent 'tis in *France* it ſelf; yet as things are here, nothing can be more miſchievous and ruinous. What he ſeems to deſerve a ſtricter reproof for in this caſe, is his making ſuch loud Complaints againſt the preſent Government and Miniſters for this fault, as if 'twas ſome ſtrange and unheard-of Miſchief, never known in the World till *Charles* the Second, by his *Knaviſh Example* (as he civilly ſtyles it) brought that and ſuch manner of Vices in faſhion in *England*:

England: But was it never ſo in any other place, or at any other time? Were Queen *Elizabeth*'s *Golden* days themſelves proof againſt the power of *Gold?* Does he expect *Cauſin*'s *Holy Court* to be ſet up in *England*, where Money will do nothing? or, which is homer; are all thoſe of any other *Party* and Intereſt ſuch ſworn Foes to a *Feeling* now and then, that they'd reject a parcel of Guineys, if thrown at their Feet? The ſumm is, that there never was, nor ever will be a Court in *England*, nor any place elſe we may ſafely add, where Gold will not be prevalent, and Men of no *Merit* often creep in where ten to one perſons of real worth and value may be rejected: And hence it follows, that whoever makes loud Complaints in things of ſuch a nature, if ſuppoſing 'em in ſome Inſtances true enough, wou'd yet be eſteem'd little leſs than *ridiculous.*

Upon this Head he falls foul on the ingenious and learned Gentleman, who is the Author of the *Obſervator*, who has done the Government more ſervice by his handſome and valuable Writings, dreſt in a Courtly and Manly ſtyle, and obliging the World with frequent and acceptable *rarities*, than ever ſome ſnarling Pens dipt in Vinegar are like to do, ſhou'd they write as many Books as he has *Obſervators.*

" We have ſeen Remarks, *ſays he*, on the ill Conſequen-
" quences of buying and ſelling Offices lately publiſh't in
" Print, and by a publick *Intelligencer*, who had either
" reaſon to believe that it is our own Caſe, or his Remarks
" were very *impertinent*----and if he did believe it, his
" expreſſing himſelf as far from granting any ſuch practi-
" ces to be in us here in *England*, ſavour'd more of that
" *vulgar Wiſdom* lately in faſhion, than of thoſe Virtues
" I mention'd before---Fidelity, Integrity, *&c.*

But

But yet more; he makes him little less than a *party concern'd*, at least privy to the business: "I find it, *says* "*he*, commonly believ'd by those, who in all probability, "little considering these things which I have now men-"tion'd, must therefore have some other Reasons from "*Matter of Fact* for their belief.

All the *Matter of fact* is, we were at that time, (while the *French* were hovering about us) in a great ferment, and, as was just, very angry with those who brought 'em hither, if we cou'd have found who those were. 'Twas so natural a Reflection from the unhappy Circumstances of those affairs, to think on the *Officers* employ'd in them, that one of a much less sagacity than this *Author*, and as dull as he'd have us believe the *Observator* himself, cou'd not but light upon it, and enquire into all the probable Reasons thereof; and why he might not fall upon the same with the present Author, without knowing any more of *Matter of fact* than he himself did, I can't imagine. Nor when the *Fret* was a little over, why some Expressions might not be *softned*, and he have liberty at least to *hope* things were not so ill as he had doubted, especially after a *publick enquiry* had been made into those Matters by persons above exception; namely, the Commons.——So that upon the whole, the World is left to judge whose Remarks are most *impertinent*. The *Intelligencer* upon *Places*, or he on the *Intelligencer*.

But though he has no such particular knowledge in the matter, yet he has shrew'd Guesses that things go wrong from his own Observation.—— He recommended a person to be made a Captain, who yet was not preferr'd—— and this he thinks — *A sign of some sinister respects too prevalent amongst them.* But he answers this himself — he did not do it in *propria persona*; nay, at last, he did not do it all, but let it drop, for ought we can learn, by the Story.—

and 'tis very hard that the Lords Commoners shou'd prefer a Man upon the Author's Recommendation, without ever *knowing* that he did recommend him; or what's worse, for ought appears without his *doing it*.

The next Reason he gives why Many are preferr'd who want desert, and so are like to injure the Nation rather than defend it, is *favour* and *affection* under which he ranks *Faction*, which he complains has had no small share in introducing *ill* Men into the Government, and keeping *good* out; Nay, not only one, but two and three Factions, or at least one with three Heads, which is full as terrible.

But those Names which he gives 'em, as well as the things meant by 'em, are so *invidious* in themselves, and have been so mischievous to the Nation, that surely he can do it very little service who endeavours to conjure 'em up again, to *disquiet* both us and them, when they have been now so long asleep and forgotten.

'Twou'd tempt a Man to run upon the other extream, tho' less inoffensively than he does; and to ask him whether he thinks not in his Judgment that the Nation has been really more pester'd with one Faction, than the three (or tripple-headed one) he has there mention'd? If we must have *Factions*, let any Man, that's of neither Party, impartially examine both, and see how much less Atheism, Malice, Uncharitableness, Swearing, Debauchery, Covetousness there is on one side than the other; and, I'm afraid, 'twou'd be a hard matter to find one to throw the first Stone. Let us borrow the Author's own words, and a very little turn will make 'em bear hard where he never intended 'em. "Is there not really such a thing as a *Par-*
"*ty*, or a *Faction* if you will, who agree to keep out those
"who are not theirs, though never so Cordial Friends to
"King *William*, &c. to Calumniate and Abuse 'em, though
"never so pious and virtuous—but be they but zealous

for

" for their own Party, be they never so vitious, debauched
" or prophane, never so empty, shallow, blustering or in-
" considerate, or meanly qualified, they shall be embraced
" as honest Men, nay as good Protestants, so they do but
" hate or rail at the Church of *England*.

And this indeed is the inseperable Mischief of all *Faction*, or seperate private Interests and Communities within Communities, distinct from, though not formally against, the general Good of the Nation. I'd fain know who had deserved best of *Jerusalem*, when besieged by the *Romans*--- He who shou'd have been of any particular *Party*, chuse which he wou'd, and rail at all the rest, as Cause enough there was all round, there as well as here; or he that shou'd have endeavour'd a lasting peace among 'em, obliterating the very Memory of all those odious distinctions which had such fatal effects.

In the same Nature, one would think a Man that loved his Country shou'd, at this time, endeavour to make them all Friends, not Enemies, to dress every Party as fairly, not as frightfully as possible; and by uniting their Affections, melt down the inveterate Enmity. Which if 'twere this Gentleman's design, he has certainly taken a very unlucky way to accomplish it.

I am much of the same Mind with my Author concerning admitting Persons into publick Employments, which he treats of *Page* 23. but perhaps for different Reasons from what he ever thought upon: One is, That the Number of those who dissent from the publick Establishment, supposing they were admitted into Employment, is not so great, as if they design'd any such thing to effect any considerable Alterations.

Another Reason is, That *Interest* being the great quarrel, quiet but that and all will be friends. But the mischief is, this Hypothesis of his, as well as other fine ones,

is impracticable, and does not any good at all, laying open to the grand Objection of those Men whom he'd ease by it.

He wou'd have none admitted to publick employ, but such as *take the Sacrament*, though the limit's larger than before, in *some solemn Assembly of Protestant Dissenters*, or others.

But here still lyes the Objection,——we are not fit for't—Why shou'd such a holy thing be made a State-Engine? 'Tis against our Consciences, cry they, to *take it at all*; and you throw us on a dreadfull hazard, either to lose all our employs, or to eat and drink our own Damnation, and I appeal to any Man whether the business is not thus fairly stated; so that after all our *whipping* and *heaving*, you see we are but just where we were, or but very little advanced.

Page 24. He seems to teach all the Princes in the World a new Scheme of *Politicks*, and wou'd perswade 'em not to *oblige Enemies*, calling that Noble part of Divine as well as Humane Prudence—little Arts, and pieces of *vulgar Craft*: and *Page* 25. pronounces very awfully—— "I have al-
"ways lookt upon a certain Condescention to, and compli-
"ance with some of that Party, to be one of the first steps
"which have been made since the Revolution; and a
"Daubing into which, we were betray'd by the pedantick
"Policy of some, *&c.* as inconsistent with true *Divinity*,
"(you may see which way he squints) as with true Po-
"licy.

This is indeed a tender Subject; but we may venture to say on't—That surely he is one of the first good Men, who ever blam'd a Prince for those truly Royal Virtues of *Clemency* and *Goodness*. The truth is, all sides have play'd the *fool* and been *mad* in their turns. Blood enough has been shed, Mischief enough happen'd, and Quarrels long enough fomented—All this the present Government takes no notice

tice of, but makes use of whoever are capable of serving it: this at the bottom displeases some, who perhaps thought to have shared all between 'em.

Show us a Prince that ever came into a distracted Kingdom, without *obliging* those who may else possibly not be very easie. And shew me he that can, a parallel of any *Revolution* in the World of this nature, made so suddenly, with less confusion and *blood* attending it; not so much as one *Insurrection* or *Rebellion* from the very beginning--A sufficient proof that no *little Arts or vulgar Tricks*, but true *Politicks* and a right Spirit of Government have had the Management of Affairs ever since. Which has consider'd the *Nature of Mankind*, and acted accordingly; and the Event has abundantly made good the *firmness* and validity of those Principles on which the *Government* has all along proceeded.

At the close of this Page he breaks out into a very pathetick Ejaculation: [*Poor Prince!* (speaking of His Majesty) *how did my Heart ake for him about this time*, tho' I knew not what was the matter?] A perfect Impulse! *Poor Man*, and just in the same condition he has been ever since.

But he goes on: *Princes are Men*; ay, and so are Authors, and at least as liable to mistakes as they.

He comes to yet worse news than all this, *Page* 27. "How dangerous a condition the King and Queen are in, "of being deliver'd up an expiatory Sacrifice to their Ene- "mies, and these Nations, of being involved in Blood and "Confusion. One half of this, the truth is, wou'd be enough to make any honest Man's *heart ake* as well as the Author's; all the hopes is, it mayn't be true; and tho' he calls what he has heap't together *Demonstrations*, there need more to perswade an unprejudic'd person to believe it.

He comes to enquire into the Means to prevent all these fatal mischiefs, and throws 'em upon our *Debauchery*, as one great Cause of all. 'Tis confess'd Sin is the cause of all the miseries of Mankind, but 'tis an impossible thing so to see

every

every circumstance, as to affirm any thing of certainty in these matters. How often is a good Cause and good Men unsuccessfull? Are the *French* the most virtuous People in the World? or must not most of these matters necessarily be left to a day of Judgment to declare the Equity of Providence, which seldom seems so exact in these outward distributions, as this *good Man* supposes it?

He seems to desire that none but *virtuous persons* might have publick Employment. And 'tis no more than every good Man wishes practicable:--But as was said in another case; if we'll converse with no *ill Men*, we must go out of the World; so if we'd make use of none else, we must e'en go the same way. God himself makes use of *ill Men*, both for good and evil, to the rest of the World; whereas he needs 'em not in either of those cases. Princes must do the same, especially when newly settled, and perhaps, sometimes, all their Reigns after. We know all *David*'s Souldiers were not of the most extraordinary Character, who tho' he himself were *a Man after God's own heart*, many under him were far otherwise. And tho' he says *he who leads a Godly life shall be his Servant*; yet *politick Reasons*, the safety of his Country, and security of his Throne, made him make use of a bloody *Joab*, because a brave General all his life-time. And did he not receive and kindly treat a treacherous *Abner*, while the true undoubted Heir of his Soveraign was alive, and who left him meerly out of Revenge, and rage, being gently accus'd of *incontinency* by his timorous Master.

To come a little nearer: Were all those *Saints* with the then Prince, his present Majesty? or had he done well to have made a *Reform* among 'em before he Embark'd, turning out whoever would *Swear*, or *Drink*, or *Whore*? Had he taken this method, his Army, ten to one, had been less than *Gideon*'s, and he must have expected as great a Miracle to have made him *Conqueror*.

If *Wars* are necessary to *purge* the World, and throw off some

ſome ill humours, contracted by long Peace and Luxury, as generally granted, ill Men may in this caſe be more uſefull than good; at leaſt I'm ſure they are better ſpared, and leſs miſt afterwards than the other.

It do's not belong to him, he acknowledges, to inquire what has been done in purſuance of the King's Letter to the Biſhop of London, *and the other Biſhops, for that belongs to them to do.*

If no Man meddled with what *did not belong to him*, the *State*, as well as *Church*, would be quieter than 'tis. But to let that *paſs*: I could wiſh he had ſpoken *more* upon this point, tho' *leſs* on ſome that go before and follow after. Ought not a Writer, who ſtudies the good and proſperity of the Government he lives under, to acknowledge and commend whatever is handſomely done, rather than make it his buſineſs to find fault with every thing? How fair an occaſion had he here for a juſt Panegyrick? But I'm unwilling to ſuſpect the true reaſon why he *would not inquire* into what had been here *done*, was becauſe he found ſomething *well done*; but I can't imagine how a Man that either comes near the *Church*, or but the *High-ways*, could be ignorant of the extraordinary methods us'd in this matter.—Of the remarkable care of my Lord of *London* in Publiſhing the Letter it ſelf with his *own*, and ſending it to all the Miniſters in his Juriſdiction; to which, ſome time after, the *Acts of Parliament* were alſo added.—and what Obedience was given thereto, all the Pulpits in *London* can witneſs: If the Miniſters were not heeded, I hope neither They nor the Government ſhall have that charg'd upon 'em, nor will the Author blame 'em, as for want of other Apoſtolical Uſages, mentioned a few Pages after, ſo for not converting of Thouſands, as they did by their Sermons, as miraculous in their Effects as the Inſpiration that Dictated 'em to the Speaker. And what if we ſhou'd ſay, ſo far were thoſe in Office, either Sacred or Secular, from neglecting their duty in this caſe, that ſome viſibly over-did it, and ſtrain'd the Laws (as in ſtopping

Gentle-

Gentlemen on the Sabbath-day) farther than ever it was intended.

After this and all other means which can be us'd, 'tis not the work of a *day* or *year* to heal those Wounds, and repair those Ruins which have been industriously made in the Manners of the *English* for perhaps above this *Age* last past. We have good Laws, we have an excellent *Example* one wou'd think enough to *shame* us into Virtue; but if in the mean time, some of the *inferior Officers* won't do their Duty, I can't imagine what the King can do more, unless they'd have him *preach* as well as *fight*, or Himself turn Informer or Constable; and, with *Harry* the 8. run to the *Cobler's Stall* to hear him *swear*, or the Miller's House to find him out in his *cheating*. This, I think, is sufficient to wipe off all the Aspersions thrown, *Page* 39, 40. and other places, upon some of the greatest and best in the Kingdom.

We wou'd now follow him in the same method he leads, to the History of his abortive Bill, and that unfortunate success it met with; but referring that to the end of his Book, where we shall meet with the Bill it self, it may be here necessary to enquire into the great and loud Complaints he makes against the Establish'd Protestant Church of the Nation.

Under this Head, it must be own'd, that never was any *particular* Church since our Saviour's time, tho' we take in that of the *Apostles* themselves, without what might be amended both in Discipline and Doctrine. And those who pretend to *Infallibility* in either, or what is next kin to it, and perhaps the same in other words, an extraordinary Purity and Gospel-perfection above their *Sister Churches*; both these have been not rarely confuted by easie and vulgar Experience. That the *Church of England*, as well as all other Christian Churches, has a great number who pretend to be her Members, in the same circumstances with those who said they were *Jews and were not, but were of the Synagogue of Satan*, too sad experience daily tells us, and she her self had rather bewail than deny.

But

But that the *visible Church* will always consist of Hypocrites and ill Men as well as true Christians; that there will be *tares* as well as *good seed* in the Field; till the Angels reap the Harvest of all Mankind, that great Shepherd himself has foretold us, who can't be deceiv'd, because his knowledge is infinite.

That the *Discipline* of our Church is not so exact as in the first Ages, and as she her self desires, is by her acknowledg'd in her *Rubrick*. That it has not been taken care of since the *Reformation*, is partly to be imputed to the almost continual hurry and struggle she has been in, from one side or the other, partly to the *Civil Government*, a great many of our Law-makers being so far from giving her more *power*, that they think she has too *much* already.

Besides all this, 'twill be as readily granted, that we have *Bigots* amongst us, as have ever had all the Churches in the World; That we have others under the *Mask* of Religion who drive on a *Secular Interest*, as there have also been the same in all Ages. That moreover, the *Croud* of Debauchees and leud persons, will, for the most part, *call* themselves of the same side that's uppermost; and that all these *Cases* are things so common and unavoidable, that they seem not to weigh so heavy in the accusation of the *National Church*, as this good Man believes.

After all she is able to make it appear, and I think I may modestly add, has already done it unanswerably, That whatever accidental defects there may be in her Model, She is yet in the Essentials of her *Doctrine* and *Discipline*, the most conform'd to the *Primitive pattern* of any in the World.

This in general: To be now more particular, and answer the severe heavy Charge in the 31, and ensuing Pages laid against her.

In what has been related, he says we may see here; "That which may *correct* and *humble* us for our *vain mag-*
"*nifying* our Church above all others, and despising, vilify-

"ing

" ing and disturbing our Brethren, who are, in many re-
" spects, better than our selves.

Speaking the *truth* of our Church, and proving it, is not *vainly magnifying* it: *Despising* and *vilifying* our Brethren had been more proper in *Heylin*'s time, when he, and the rest of his temper, *unchurch'd* all the World beside themselves: If he means our *Dissenting Brethren* at home, it seems no such scandalous vilifying 'em as he insinuates, to think there are not so many Men of *Parts* and *Learning* amongst 'em as may be found otherwhere--For their being in many respects *better than we*, Comparisons are odious; and notwithstanding that, we may be also in *many respects better than they*, and I heartily wish in both cases we may learn what's truly good and imitable of one another, and they *disturb* us no more than we do them, since what is *past* he do's not speak of, and will only incline a Man to look back yet farther: What wou'd be a kinder *Inquiry*, is who freed 'em from these *Disturbances*, but a *Parliament* compos'd almost entirely of *Church-of-England-Men*? And who wou'd have yet done more, but the Bishops of the same *Church*, both in *Parliament* and *Convocation*?

'Tis too like the most uncharitable of those our *forementioned Brethren*, to fix such a dreadfull Censure on so *great*, and *learn'd*, and *pious* a Body of Men, as he do's in the following Lines, comparing the Church of *England* to that of the *Laodiceans*, (as I remember some in the late times interpreted all that Prophecy of the same *Church*,) and tells 'em plainly that they are *wretched*, and *poor*, and *miserable*, and *blind* and *naked*. Too truly indeed might the Character of some of the other seven Churches agree with ours, that our Saviour might have *some things against us*, but I shou'd have thought very few beside a virulent Papist, or most rigid Sectary, wou'd chuse the very worst of the seven to compare us to.

That there is scarce a notorious *scandalous person* in the Nation but of our Communion, is too palbable a--- to be answer'd; that there are too many such, has been already acknowledg'd

knowledg'd and accounted for. That such persons, if of *Quality*, are *complimented* and treated by the *Bishops* themselves, may be true, and those *good Men* know nothing of their Debauchery---but did they, something is due to their *Character*; and they may as innocently, I hope, be *Complimented* with those Titles which are their due, without any imputation of partiality or *flattery*, as St. *Paul* styled a corrupt *Roman* Governour--- *Most Noble* Festus!

He next charges us in the same 32*d* Page with *as great neglect in our Worship*, but is so fair to acknowledge 'tis common to all the *Reformation*, and that is our not Celebrating the Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist *every day*. " Adding, " that he knows not any Church in the World, from the " Passion of our Saviour, to the time of the Reformation, " where this was not a part of their ordinary publick Worship " of God, and their daily Sacrifice. But either his knowledge is very suddenly improv'd, or he most egregiously contradicts himself, and his Zeal makes him over-run his Memory; for the very same Page, but a few Lines off, he owns both this and the Effects on't in the time of St. *Ambrose* and *Chrysostome*. About some fair thousand Years before the Reformation, and when indeed the Church first began to have need on't. " In the Greek Church, *says he*, where this " neglect first began, as is noted by St. *Ambrose*, and much " complained of by *Chrysostom*, it was follow'd by dismal " Contentions, *&c.* He adds, he is well satisfied that our " want of a daily *Christian Sacrifice* is one of the principal " Prejudices which hinders the *Reconciliation* of the Papists " to our Church. A *new* and an *odd* Argument. *New*, since 'twas never urg'd before by any of the Communion for themselves; and very *odd*, when 'tis known we celebrate it, *every Sunday at least*, by our Rubrick, where there are enough to communicate without making the Ordinance *contemptible*. Whereas at present the Catholicks seldom or never receive but at *Easter*, nor any other *Christian Church*, not so much

as thoſe that are ſo much *better than we*, oftner than once a Month.

Nor yet where that is wanting, I hope, do we want a *daily Chriſtian Sacrifice*, unleſs *Prayer* and *Praiſe* deſerve not to be call'd by that Name. And why the ſecond Service may not be us'd at other times as well as at the *Sacrament*, when the Prayers don't *immediately refer* to, or neceſſarily imply the reception thereof, I can ſee no reaſon, nor I believe he himſelf invent any, any more than for his calling it a *jejune* and *barren* thing, or comparing it to what is ſo.

He next complains, that our *Offices* and *Collects* are *defective*, but others will complain they are redundant, and 'tis impoſſible to pleaſe both.

He finds as much fault with our *Preaching* as our *Prayers*; that it tends to introduce ſuperficial *Formality* and *Phariſaical* Morality---- neglecting to preſs Humility, Contempt of the World, Heavenly-mindedneſs, Devotion to God, and Univerſal Charity to all Men. Thus raking up all the weak baffled Objections of our Enemies, which neither need nor deſerve any farther Anſwer.

Page 35. We are further accuſed for want of care to make *Proſelytes*, being like *Phariſees* in every thing elſe. The Charity and Civility of the Man! I'd defy a *Quaker* to outdoe him in *Compariſons*, with whom it ſeems he wou'd joyn us, in Expeditions to *Rome* and *Conſtantinople*, to convert the *Pope* and *Grand Seignior*.

But what need is there of going ſo far abroad, when even here in *England*, &c. *the Goſpel it ſeems is not throughly planted*. The old Complaint of *Famine* of the *word* renew'd, where, in truth, a *Surfeit* is more to be apprehended. But if things be as he repreſents 'em, there is need enough of thoſe *Evangeliſts* he wou'd have ſent forth throughout the Kingdom.

What he adds of the ſmall number of *Churches*, and the great multitude of *Miniſters*, many of 'em unprovided for, relates more to the *State* than *Church*, in whoſe power 'tis both

both to *Erect* and *Endow* what is wanting, to reduce ſome things to a little more *Equality*, and to take ſome care or other to obviate the miſchief which ariſes from the vaſt diſproportion between the *Clergy* and *Benefices* whereon to maintain 'em.

There follows a complicated Charge againſt the Miniſters of *London*, *Page* 36. " That they neither invite others " to God's publick Worſhip, nor come themſelves, nor uſe " it but *Sundays*, or *Sundays*, *Wedneſdays* and *Fridays*, or " not at ſuch Hours as ſome of their Charge can only have " for that Service--They preſs not their People to frequent " the moſt ſolemn and peculiar part of our Chriſtian Wor- " ſhip; and then, to excuſe their own neglect, falſly ac- " cuſe their People, and charge it upon them.

Whether this be a juſt Accuſation, or an unjuſt, it falls very heavy on thoſe who give the ſcandal, or him that invents it; and he might well expect, as he intimates, that 'twou'd *offend ſome perſons*; tho' to hinder 'em from taking any notice on't, he plainly tells 'em they can't be ſo offended, unleſs void of *Piety and Conſideration*. But there's no reaſon *Innocence* ſhou'd be huſſt out of its own defence, and 'tis an eaſie matter, in order to the ſame, to ſend him to *places* where the attendance of publick daily prayers, is as earneſtly *preſt* as poſſible, tho' is ineffectually as if not a word ſaid on't. Where they are us'd *every day*, Morning and Evening, as well as *Sundays*, *Wedneſdays* and *Fridays*, at ſuch hours as are thought moſt convenient for an Auditory, (tho' what is ſo to one perſon, is often the contrary to another,) when, I ſay, more can hardly be ſaid by *Man*, nor with more conſtancy and *earneſtneſs* to preſs the people to this moſt *ſolemn part of Chriſtian Worſhip*; yet where there is ſeldom a Congregation large enough to make the *Reſponſes*, nor in ſuch caſes as theſe is it ſaid to excuſe their own neglect, by *falſly accuſing* their People, and laying it upon them.

And, the truth is, tho' many more than do frequent ſuch

Prayers,

Prayers might be there, if they pleas'd; yet for the much larger part of the common people, this is so far from being their *Duty*, that they might perhaps rather sin in doing it. God will have *Mercy*, and not *Sacrifice*; and they ought not to neglect their Families, or providing for their own House, tho' for the highest Acts of Devotion. And after all, there are very many *places* in the City and Suburbs, where God's Service is decently and constantly perform'd *every day*, and Morning and Evening-Sacrifice presented to Heaven---a custom never practis'd by those *better Men* whom he so much admires. He persists to charge us with (as he calls it before) greater abominations than these. " A Pharisaical Ex-
" action, Pharisaical Persecution, and at the same time per-
" mitting notorious contempt of the Laws of God in our
" own members, without check or controul, or scarce seri-
" ous Resentment. He drives on yet more zealously, calls
" us Fanaticks and Mad-men, and so much worse Fanaticks
" than those we call so; that, he says, 'tis a truth too no-
" torious to be deny'd, that we have few Christian Assem-
" blies, besides those of the Dissenters, which can properly
" be call'd Holy.------ I wonder indeed, and so wou'd any one who reads his Book, that he do's not forsake such a Pharisaical, nay Diabolical Communion, and joyn himself to the Holy *Ones* he so much admires; and were the Church of *England* such as he represents it, I think it shou'd be one of the last I wou'd communicate with. We have had all, 'tis too true, our Sins and Follies, and, I hope, are by this time of both sides pretty well convinc'd and asham'd of 'em. There is not indeed that desire of *Unity* which wou'd be wish'd among Christians, of either side, but the Inclination to mischief one another, which has stood still no-where, nor ought to be fix'd on one Party, since it has gone all round, is sure pretty well work't off; and only such things as these, which have a direct tendency to revive the former Enmity, and keen Animosities, which every good Man wishes Eternally buried.

But

But the *Nobility* and *Gentry* meet with no kinder entertainment from his warm Zeal, than the Church and Clergy. Since even the *Mob*, he aſſures us, have more ſteadineſs, conſtancy and virtue, than a great part of them can pretend to. Contrary to which one may ſafely aver, that take a proportion of both, tho' I don't pretend to be ſo intimate with either of 'em, as I find he is; and I am pretty confident 'twill be much harder to find a Man tollerable virtuous among the *ſcum* of the People, whom he magnifies and admires, than among thoſe he *vilifies* and abuſes. And if he were no more fam'd for ſteadineſs and conſtancy, than that *Mob* he commends, he wou'd not have the Reputation the World now gives him: Which is ſo great, that I can hardly think he really intends ſome things which he ſpeaks a little too warmly, without being examin'd by his calmer Judgment. What account elſe ſhall we give of that paſſage, *Page* 42. where he not only prefers the *Mob* before a great part of the *Nobility* and *Gentry*, but, one wou'd think, intended to *ſet 'em* upon them (as his Brother the *Modeſt Inquirer* do's upon the Clergy) by telling 'em, " That wicked Men, be they Gen-" tlemen or Noblemen, or what they will; are ten thou-" ſand times worſe than the dirt of the Streets, and ought " to be *trod upon by the meaneſt of Humane race.*

I thought there had been reſpect due to the publick Character of a perſon, be his inward Qualifications what they wou'd; however the *Mob* is but an ill *Judge*, and if it once calls a Man wicked, as they oft do when a perſon don't pleaſe 'em, there are but a few ſteps more to their *treading 'em under their feet.*

For the *King*'s Duty, which he as freely lays down as if he were another *Moſes* ſent from Heaven for that very purpoſe, did not his own *Inclinations* and Virtue ſufficiently prompt him to the performance thereof, he has, I doubt not, notwithſtanding the ſquinting Cenſures ſcatter'd through the Book on their *Policy* and *Divinity*; thoſe about him who

can

can repreſent all thoſe things to his Majeſty as faithfully, and a little more mannerly than he do's, and who wou'd both in publick and private occaſions humbly recommend to his practice thoſe Virtues for which he is already ſo eminent--- *Fidelity to God, Courage, Vigor, Faith, Reſignation, and Righteouſneſs:* Nor can I ſee any reaſon why they ſhou'd not *Preach* on all theſe Subjects, at leaſt as well as my *Author.*

Omitting all the Over-worn *De Jure* and *De Facto* buſineſs, it ought to be remarkt to the Author's honour, that he certainly has no reſpect of perſons; for after he has done with the King, the Parliament next are to be taken to task--but they are e'en ſo bad, 'tis in vain to *preach* to 'em, there being no hopes of their Amendment, and therefore he thinks it a good *expedient* to ſend 'em about their buſineſs, or, as he expreſſes, to *diſſolve 'em and call another ſpeedily,* unleſs they'll mend their manners.

'Tis enough to ſay, on this Head, that we have had few *Houſes of Commons* who have made more *good Laws*, or more heartily eſpous'd the Intereſt of the Nation than this at preſent ſitting, which deſerves ſure a more gratefull treatment than ſome Mens *Civility* thinks fit to give 'em.

He's got to Sea again, *Pag.* 53. and tells us very ill news; " That our Men of War are generally fill'd with ſuch Cap- " tains and Officers, as few Merchants wou'd intruſt with " a Ship of 200 Tun; and 'tis the common opinion of moſt " Seamen and Merchants, that there are but few amongſt " 'em that are any way qualified for that ſervice.

Yet the Blew Squadron, by their own Relation, or that part of it which cou'd get up, fought as bravely as cou'd be expected from Men, and made the *French* Fleet bend before 'em. The Author, as hot Men often do, uſually over-ſhoots the mark; had he only complain'd that *ſome*, nay that *too many* of of the Officers might not be ſo fit for their Places, this had lookt with a face of probability; but when he adds---that they are *generally* ſuch, one may, I hope, take the

the Liberty to believe, that either his Informations are faulty, or he has drawn such Consequences from it as it won't well *bear*.

For those *Lists* mention'd of such as were able and ready to serve the Government, yet refus'd; there are two *Questions* may be ask'd before any thing can be pronounced on that Subject: The first, Whether there were Places enough *vacant* for 'em, since otherwise, by turning out others to make room for them, both the *Sea-men* and *Captains* might be too dangerously disoblig'd? The other, Whether they were Qualified by *Law*; if not, (not to meddle with Right, which we formerly discours'd of,) we have now no *Dispensing Power*, and they cou'd not be accepted by those in publick *Trusts* without endangering themselves, whatever service it might be to the Nation?

We are now come to the *Postscript*, wherein the Author promises an *Appendix*; the design whereof shou'd be to satisfie the *Consciences* of many mistaken honest Men, in the matter of Allegiance to the present Government. A Province which he seems well enough able to manage, and which has been long expected from him; and had he made that the Book, and all this the Appendix, if not left it out altogether, he might perhaps have done his Country more service than this is ever like to do. We come now to the Examination of that Bill, inserted at the End of his *Book*, and which has made so much noise in the *Body* on't, which *matter* I've reserv'd entire to this place for the more distinct handling of the same.

This Bill, or a Message from a *Divine*, by the desire of several *Bishops*, with the *advice* of divers of the *Judges*, drawn up by the *Author*, for the effectual correcting of the most *notorious Sins and Vices of the Age*, he complains was quash't and lost by the *cowardise* and *worldly Wisdom* of the *Bishops*, and the worse Inclinations of some of the *Temporal Lords*, who were likely to make such opposition against it; That the most *prudential* of the Bishops were against its being read, lest it shou'd be rejected: And by publishing this Story, he thinks to make the Ears of all *pious Men tingle*, to raise up a better Spirit in the Nation, and shame the Great Men of it into better Manners——as are his own words.

To set this *matter* in a better *light*, and answer those heavy Accusations which he here lets fly, on some of the greatest Subjects in the Kingdom, Two things will be necessary: First, to enquire into the Nature of his Bill proposed, what *Crimes* therein to be punish'd, and what their *punishments*? To prove not only the reason the Bishops had in not appearing for the Bill, but that 'twas not

only *prudent*, but *lawfull*, and even their Duty, as circumstances then were, to act in that manner.

The Bill it self, it must be own'd, contains many *excellent things*, particularly the repression of *Blasphemy*, *Swearing*, *Perjury*, *Prophanation of the Lord's Day*, *Adultery*, *Fornication* and *Drunkenness*. The Penalty's *just*, tho' *severe*; the Methods of Prosecution very adviseable and prudent; the Clause added, to make *wilfull neglect of publick Officers*, punishable as *Perjury*, extreamly convenient for the Nation.— And were this all contain'd in the said *Bill*, the Complaint wou'd be somewhat fairer against the *rejecting* it. But look on-ward to *Page* 4. and let the wiser part of the World see whether 'twas fit to be read with those *Clauses* therein afterward inserted.

" And because (it goes on) Excess of Drinking exposes people " to prophane Swearing, and such Excesses are usually promoted " by drinking Healths: be it enacted, that every person who shall " *begin* or *pledge any Health*, shall forfeit and pay, as is before en- " acted, for prophane Swearing.—

Now what this Forfeiture is, the Paragraph before tells us— " Convicted persons are to pay from 20*s.* downward; and to be " bound to their good Behaviour; and if not able to pay the " Summs specified, to be set in the Stocks for the first Offence, and " publickly Whipt for every other Offence afterward. See on- wards, *Page* 6, & 7.

" And be it further enacted, That no person, keeping a pub- " lick House within the Cities of *London* and *Westminster*, or Bo- " rough of *Southwark*, &c. shall keep any Organ, or other Instru- " ment or Instruments of Musick for the Entertainment of Guests, " on pain of forfeiting the Summ of 20*l.* and on farther pain of " being disabled to sell Ale, Wine, *&c.* for the space of a Twelve- " month after such Conviction.

One wou'd think all this shou'd be enough for *Drinking* the *King's Health*, or keeping a pair of *Bagpipes*—But alas, this is not half on't. Over and beside all this, reade what follows: " And be it enac- " ted, *&c.* That when any person shall be convicted for any of " these Offences, the Judge or Justice, before whom the Convicti- " ons are made, shall immediately thereupon signifie the same to the " Bishop of the Diocess, to the end that he may thereupon pro- " ceed to *Excommunication* of the Offenders, who shall not be Ab- " solv'd but upon special Order of the Bishop, and upon Certificate " by the Parson or Vicar, *&c.* where the Offenders shall inhabit; " that the said Offenders shall on some Lord's Day in the Morning,

" imme-

" immediately after the Creed, appointed for the Communion-Service,
" in the Body or greateſt Iſle of the ſaid Church, have publickly con-
" feſs'd his or her fault, and ſolemnly declare his or her unfeigned
" ſorrow and repentance for the ſame.

Such was the *Bill*, ſuch the *Act* deſign'd by this good Man, and ſuch the *Crimes* and *Puniſhments* therein contain'd; which whether or no 'twas ſuitable to the *Gravity* and *Wiſdom*, or *Goodneſs* and *Charity* of the Reverend Fathers to eſpouſe, I leave even the moſt rigid Enemy of their Order impartially to conſider.

To *begin*, or *pledge* a Health, which all the World that can ſpeak ſenſe, now acknowledge in it ſelf abſolutely *innocent*, and the ill conſequences thereof far enough from being *neceſſary* thereto; this muſt be equall'd in *Puniſhment*, and therefore in *Crime*, with prophane Curſing and Swearing; this muſt be puniſh'd with *Impriſonment*, *Stocks*, and *Whipping*, the higheſt marks of publick Shame and Infamy; and not only ſo, but thoſe who have endured all this from the *Secular* Power, be turn'd over to the *Eccleſiaſtical*, and given over to *Satan*, for only drinking or pledging one ſingle Glaſs, and at the ſame time wiſhing health to King *William* and Queen *Mary*, or the beſt and neareſt *Friends* they have in the World; and yet more, do publick *Pennance* in the open Church for the ſame, without which no Abſolution to be granted 'em.

In the ſame manner muſt thoſe be dealt with who, in a publick *Houſe*, keep any Organ, or Inſtrument of Muſick. Woe be to any poor Alehouſe-keeper that happens to play upon the Fiddle or Bagpipe, nay even a Jews harp, muſt coſt him 20 *l.* and ſend him to the *Devil* into the *bargain*.

'Twou'd be worth the while to examine whether this good Man has not ſomething of *Diſcord* in his Nature, every thing in the World being out of tune in his Ears, he is therefore ſuch a bitter Enemy to whatever ſeems like Harmony.

Shou'd we fairly repreſent the plain Conſequences of ſuch an Act, had it taken place, 'twou'd be a hard matter for the Reader to be grave in peruſing 'em. When, for example, a couple of hainous Offenders againſt this new Law, after the *Stocks*, and *Whipping*, and *Paying*, muſt come at laſt to the great Iſle to acknowledge their abominable *Crimes* before the Congregation.

Verily, Chriſtian Friends, (ſays the firſt of 'em) *I have moſt lewdly and ſcandalouſly pledg'd a Health to my Father and Mother, and I hope you'll all take warning by my Example.*

And indeed, Beloved! (cries the ſecond) *I have yet greater wickedneſs, and been guilty of the hainous Sin of keeping in my Houſe a Babyloniſh Bag-pipe, a whole neſt of filthy Whiſtles, call'd an Organ — for which I deſervedly ſtand here at this preſent.*

To

To be graver; I ask whether these things wou'd not very well become a *Christian Congregation*? and which wou'd appear more decently there, the Penance of these people, or the Reading this Act? which how proper 'tis to be read in *Churches*, let any Man who will take the pains to read it any where else consider.

From what has been already said on the Bill it self, may be drawn sufficient to vindicate those *Reverend Persons*, who were not forward to promote it against all the World. What they *might* have done since is another Question, and foreign enough from that which they are here accus'd of, *viz.* wanting *courage* or *honesty* to promote this *very Bill*.

But yet further: Supposing, for once, that the *Bill* had been on all accounts unexceptionable, as to the draught of it, and the matter it contain'd, 'tis easily prov'd that the *Bishops* not only lawfully *might*, but in prudence and duty *ought* to have acted as they did, supposing circumstances, as he himself represents 'em.

"The reason, he says, why they flag'd in their prosecution of that "matter, were, because the most *prudential* among 'em apprehended, if "the Bill had been read, it wou'd, by a contrary Faction, have been "thrown out of the House, and therefore advis'd the not reading it "till a more favourable and convenient time.

Now I'd fain know whether in this they did not act like *wise* and *honest* Men? Ought not a *positive* Duty to be, in some cases, forborn or delay'd, if any notable inconvenience will, according to the most rational probability, ensue thereon, may hinder us from the same for the future? There are many Duties, as every one knows, which bind *semper*, but not *ad semper*, which *always* oblige a Man, but don't oblige him always to exercise 'em. Is not *Prudence* a Christian Virtue? or how is the World like to be govern'd, if in the room thereof we set up wild Enthusiasm? Reproof of 'em is an undoubted Duty: but will any be so absurd to say I ought to reprove a Man which I am sure wou'd *stab* me presently if I shou'd offer to do so? This for Illustration. But, to come nearer, Ought I to *rebuke an Elder publickly*? Ought I to deal with a *Prince* as with another Man? Are there not the *Mollia tempora fandi*, and *agendi* too, which every *Wise* Man will observe, as the hinges on which almost all Actions run? On the whole, we are not to cast *Pearls*, where they'll be trampled under foot, nor to set about the most laudable *Enterprizes* where we have all *Moral Certainty*, it will be quash'd if we then do so, and as fair a probability of accomplishing it according to our desires, if we take a more favourable opportunity for the same. The application of all which, to the present purpose, is so plain, there needs no more words about it.

THE END.

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